

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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R 061124Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3014

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3723

E O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, IS

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH PRIMIN RABIN

1. AT 4TH OF JULY RECEPTION AMB KEATING CONGRATULATED RABIN ON QUICK ACTION TAKEN BY HIS GOVT IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS RETURN FROM ENGLAND ON ECONOMIC REFORM PACKAGE. AMB NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THESE MEASURES WERE CERTAINLY NECESSARY, THEY WERE ALSO POTENTIALLY POLITICALLY DIFFICULT AND HE ADMIRERED COURAGE OF GOVT IN TAKING THIS ACTION.

2. RABIN REPLIED THAT IMMEDIATE ACTION WAS NECESSARY AFTER HIS RETURN BECAUSE OF LEAKS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED POTENTIAL POLITICAL UNPOPULARITY OF ECONOMIC REFORM PACKAGE, BUT NOTED THE IMPORTANT THING WAS THAT THE DECISION WAS THE RIGHT ONE. RABIN SAID THAT AS FAR ASY HE WAS CONCERNED, HIS GOVT WAS GOING TO TAKE THE RIGHT COURSE EVEN IF THIS MEANT SOME EROSION IN DOMESTIC-POLITICAL SUPPORT. RABIN ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT HE BELIEVED THAT IF THE GOVT DID WHAT IT BELIEVED WAS RIGHT AND ACTED DECISIVELY, THIS WOULD ALSO BE GOOD POLITICS.

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3. COMMEMNT: THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT RABIN AND HIS GOVT HAVE GAINED IN STATURE IN RECENT WEEKS. OUR IMPRESS IS THAT ISRAELIS ABHORE THE IDEA OF A RETURN TO THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL ANARCHY OF THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF THE YEAR AND ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT RABIN GOVT WHICH ACTS DECISIVELY. THIS, OF COURSE, MIGHT CHANGE IF POCKETBOOK PINCH BECOMES MORE ACUTE BUT FOR THE TIME BEING AT LEAST THERE IS GENERAL RECOGNITION OF NEED TO TAKE DIFFICULT STEPS TO COMBAT SOARING INFLATION RATE.

4. AS CONCERNS RABIN'S COMMENT RE "GOOD POLITICS" DECISIVE VOTE IN KNESSET IN FAVOR OF GOVT ECONOMIC PACKAGE SURPRISED MOST ISRAELIS AND OTHER OBSERVERS. THE OLIKUD OPPOSITION WAS CLEARLY OUTMANEUVERRD. SOME SENIOR GOVT OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT RESULT WILL HASTEN RETURN OF NRP TO GOVT. FOR EXAMPLE, GAD YAACOV, MINISTER OF TRANSPORT, HAS TOLD US THAT NRP NOW CLEARLY REALIZES THE LABOR ALIGNMENT CAN GET ALONG WITHOUT IT AND HE EXPECTS THIS TO CAUSE IRRESISTIBLE PRESSURE LEADING TO THE EARLY NRP RETURN. IT WORTH NOTING THAT RABIN TOLD AMB THAT AS FAR AS NRP WAS CONCERNED THE NEXT STEP WAS COMPLETEDLY UP TO THEM BECAUSE HE HAD GONE AS FAR AS HE COULD IN TRYING TO MEET THEIR DEMANDS.
VELIOTES

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